

Iwal language

Iwal (also called **Kaiwa** from Jabêm *Kai Iwac* "Iwac highlanders") is an Austronesian language spoken by about 1,900 people from nine villages in Morobe Province, Papua New Guinea (Cobb & Wroge 1990). Although it appears most closely related to the South Huon Gulf languages, it is the most conservative member of its subgroup.

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Phonology

Iwal distinguishes 5 vowels and 16 consonants. Unlike most of its neighboring languages, it distinguishes the lateral /l/ from the trill /r/, the latter derived from earlier *s, as in *aru* from Proto-Oceanic (POc) *qasu 'smoke', *ruru-* from POc *susu 'breast', and *ur* from POc *qusan 'rain'. Otherwise it appears to be the most phonologically conservative language in the South Huon Gulf chain (see Ross 1988:154–160). It has retained POc *t as /t/ (not /l/ or /y/) and POc *mw as /mw/ (not /my/ or /ny/), as in *mwat* 'snake' from POc *mwata.

Vowels (orthographic)

Iwal	
Kaiwa	
Native to	Papua New Guinea
Region	Morobe Province
Native speakers	2,100 (2011) ^[1]
Language family	Austronesian <ul style="list-style-type: none">Malayo-Polynesian<ul style="list-style-type: none">Oceanic<ul style="list-style-type: none">Western Oceanic<ul style="list-style-type: none">North New Guinea ?<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ngero–Vitiaz ?<ul style="list-style-type: none">Huon Gulf<ul style="list-style-type: none">South Huon Gulf<ul style="list-style-type: none">Iwal
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	kbm
Glottolog	iwal1237 (http://glottolog.org/resource/language/id/iwal1237) ^[2]

	<u>Front</u>	<u>Central</u>	<u>Back</u>
<u>High</u>	i		u
<u>Mid</u>	e		o
<u>Low</u>		a	

Consonants (orthographic)

	<u>Bilabial</u>	<u>Alveolar</u>	<u>Palatal</u>	<u>Velar</u>	<u>Glottal</u>
<u>Voiceless stop</u>	p	t		k	
<u>Voiced stop</u>	b	d		g	
<u>Nasal</u>	m	n		ng	
<u>Fricative</u>	v	s			-h-
<u>Lateral</u>		l			
<u>Rhotic</u>		r			
<u>Approximant</u>	w		y		

Morphology

Pronouns and person markers

Free pronouns

<u>Person</u>	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>	<u>Dual</u>	<u>Paucal</u>
<u>1st person inclusive</u>		eitit	tutlu	total
<u>1st person exclusive</u>	ayeu ~ au	amei	eilu	eitol
<u>2nd person</u>	mie	yem	yemlu	yemtol
<u>3rd person</u>	ei	eisir	sulu	sotol

Genitive pronouns

<u>Person</u>	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
<u>1st person inclusive</u>		a-nd
<u>1st person exclusive</u>	a-ngg	a-meimei
<u>2nd person</u>	a-m	a-im
<u>3rd person</u>	a-ne	a-s

Possessive suffixes

<u>Person</u>	<u>Singular</u>	<u>Plural</u>
<u>1st person inclusive</u>		-(a)nd
<u>1st person exclusive</u>	-(a)ngg	-(a)nggamei
<u>2nd person</u>	-m (-am > -em)	-(a)nggaim
<u>3rd person</u>	-Ø (-a > -e)	-s

Deictics

Iwal deictics correlate with first, second, and third person, each of which has a long and a short form. The latter appear to be anaphoric in usage. Deictics also serve to bracket relative clauses: *ete/ebe ... ok/nok/nik*. By far the most common brackets are *ebe ... ok*, but if the information in the clause is associated with either speaker or addressee, the brackets are likely to be *ete ... nik* or *ete ... nok*. Deictics may occur either in place of nouns or postposed to nouns, as in *nalk etok* 'that earth/soil'.

- *ete(n)ik, nik* 'near speaker'
- *ete(n)ok, nok* 'near addressee'
- *et(e)ok/eb(e)ok, ok* 'away from speaker or addressee'

Numerals

Traditional Iwal counting practices started with the digits of the left hand, then continued on the right hand, and then the feet to reach '20', which translates as 'one person'. Higher numbers are multiples of 'one person'. Nowadays, most counting above '5' is done in Tok Pisin; in the Iwal New Testament, all numbers above '5'—except *bage isgabu* '10'—are written with Arabic numerals and most likely read in Tok Pisin.

<u>Numeral</u>	<u>Term</u>	<u>Gloss</u>
1	dongke/ti	'one'
2	ailu	'two'
3	aitol	'three'
4	aivat	'four'
5	bage tavlu	'hands half/part'
6	bage tavlu ano dongke	'hands half right one'
7	bage tavlu ano ailu	'hands half right two'
8	bage tavlu ano aitol	'hands half right three'
9	bage tavlu ano aivat	'hands half right four'
10	bage isgabu	'hands both/pair'
15	bage isgabu be va tavlu	'hands both and feet half'
20	buni amol ti	'[?] person one'
100	buni amol bage tavlu	'[?] person hands half [= '5']'

Bioclassifying prefixes

One unusual feature of Iwal is a small set of bioclassifying prefixes: *ei-* (POc **kayu*) for trees, *wer-* for edible greens, *man(k)-* (POc **manuk*) for birds, *ih-* (POc **ikan*) for fish.

- *eivovo* 'canoe, canoe tree'
- *eiweiwei* 'mango tree' (POc **waiwai*)
- *weru* 'two-leaf (Tok Pisin *tulip*), *Gnetum gnemon*, a tree with paired edible leaves'
- *weryambum* 'cabbage'
- *mankbubu* 'pigeon' (POc **bune*)
- *mankaruel* 'cassowary' (POc **kasuari*)
- *ihtangir* 'Spanish mackerel' (Tok Pisin *tangir*)

Syntax

Word order

The basic word order in Iwal is SVO, with (mostly) prepositions, preposed genitives, postposed adjectives and relative clauses. Relative clauses are marked at both ends, and so are some prepositional phrases. Negatives come at the ends of the clauses they negate. There is also a class of deverbal resultatives that follow the main verb (and its object, if any).

ei ni- tle eivovo butu
3SG FUT3SG chop canoe down

'He'll chop down the canoe tree.'

wakas gi- sov nalk aplo gi- le ite
root 3SG descend earth inside 3SG go not

'The roots did not go deep into the ground.'

in- di gen ete ayeu ga- lgum nik
3PL see thing DEM 1SG 1SG do DEM

'They'll see the things I have done.'

Verb serialization

Verb serialization is very common in Iwal. Within a serial verb construction, all verbs must agree in tense and the perfective marker is itself a serialized verb. Negatives come at the ends of the clauses they negate.

ei ni- tle butu ni- le ni- tak ni- kwai
3SG FUT3SG chop down FUT3SG go FUT3SG stay FUT3SG finish

'He'll chop it down and it'll go and lie there.'

atob ei ni- mbweg ni- wei nalk ite
then 3SG FUT3SG stay FUT3SG be.on earth not

'Then he won't sit on the ground.'

gi- dugdug gi- sov gi- le gi- tak
3SG roll 3SG descend 3SG go 3SG stay

'It rolled on down until it stopped.'

Note

The primary source for this article is Bradshaw (2001), whose copyright holder is Joel Bradshaw, whose contributions here are licensed under the GFDL.

References

1. Iwal (<https://www.ethnologue.com/18/language/kbm/>) at *Ethnologue* (18th ed., 2015)
 2. Hammarström, Harald; Forkel, Robert; Haspelmath, Martin, eds. (2017). "Iwal" (<http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/iwal1237>). *Glottolog 3.0*. Jena, Germany: Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History.
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